REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5-8, 12-15 and 19-20 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment amends Claims 1, 5, 8, 12, 15, and 19 without introducing any new matter; and cancels Claims 4, 11, and 18 without prejudice or disclaimer

Claims 1, 6-8, 13-15 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA) in view of Raphaeli et al (U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0103521; hereinafter "Raphaeli"), further in view of Takano (U.S. Patent No. 5,668,840; hereinafter "Takano"). Claims 4-5, 11-12 and 18-19 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter. In response, independent Claims 1, 8 and 15 are amended to recite all the features of dependent Claims 4, 11, and 18 thereby placing the application in condition for allowance. Consequently, Claims 4, 11, and 18 are cancelled and Claims 5, 12, and 19 are amended to change the claim dependency.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1, 5-8, 12-15 and 19-20 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this

application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact

Applicants' undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)
I:\ATTY\NS\000620\217359US\217359US-AM3-DRAFT.DOC

10